

Minutes - August 12, 2002 - Special

Minutes of the Special Meeting
of the City Council of the
CITY OF DARIEN
AUGUST 12, 2002

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Carmen D. Soldato called the Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Darien with the Darien Park District Board of Commissioners to order at 7:00 P.M.

2. ROLL CALL - The Roll Call of Aldermen by City Clerk Coleman was as follows:

Present: Richard Biehl David Hagen
Morgan Cotten Joseph Marchese
Sean P. Durkin James Tikalsky

Absent: Kathleen Moesle-Weaver
Also in Attendance: Carmen D. Soldato, Mayor
Joanne F. Coleman, City Clerk
Bryon D. Vana, City Administrator
Patricia Kampwirth, Darien Park District Commissioner
Donald McGreal, Darien Park District Commissioner
Scott Nerger, Darien Park District Administrator

3. DECLARATION OF A QUORUM - There being six Aldermen present, Mayor Soldato declared a quorum.

4. DISCUSSION OF JOINT USE FACILITY

Mayor Soldato welcomed everyone and gave a brief background on the joint use facility. He noted that Public Works requested more land for equipment storage and that acreage east of the current site became available for purchase. He said that State funds were obtained for a joint facility, which included other taxing bodies (County, Fire Districts, School District, Park District) for a multi-functional facility.

Administrator Nerger said that the Darien Park District had been involved with the process and formal discussions with City Staff; he referred to a drawing dated August 13, 2001. He noted that money had been earmarked for the facility but that it had been utilized to purchase the Marion Hills building after the referendum failed. He stated that he wrote a letter to the City in March/April, 2002, which informed the City that the District needed to withdraw from the proposed joint use facility. Mayor Soldato commented that the City Council did not receive the referenced letter.

Mayor Soldato spoke as a citizen and inquired if the District could partake if money became available through other means. Administrator Nerger spoke about two parcels owned by the District: 7201 Cass Avenue and 802 Plainfield Road, which could possibly be sold. The parcels are both zoned R-2 and are surrounded by residential.

Commissioner Kampwirth inquired what the timeframe was for the construction of the joint use facility. Mayor Soldato responded that the City was trying to obtain confirmed interest from other entities. She asked if the District could join the City at a later date; Mayor Soldato responded that the City owned the land but there would be additional costs for construction, which was upward of \$6 million for a 92,000 sq.ft. building.

Mayor Soldato stated that Council discussed storage of school buses at their Goal Setting Session, that he had met with the School Board and that there was a decision to store the school buses outside, which would decrease the square footage and cost of the building. He indicated that the District needed to decide what they really needed in order to consider other reductions.

Alderman Biehl asked if the District was serious in remaining a participant in the joint use facility. He suggested that if the City had the building constructed, that when the District was financially stable they could join the City. Alderman Hagen agreed with Alderman Biehl who suggested design of the facility with the option for expansion in the future, which would make the facility a cooperative venture.

Commissioner McGreal stated that the District had not revisited the facility issue because they needed to focus on their primary objective. He said that the long-term goal was to build a recreation center and that the Marion Hills facility was only a short-term solution. Discussion of the District's debt ensued.

Commissioner Kampwirth stated that if the two parcels were sold that the District could commit to the joint use facility in less than ten (10) years.

Alderman Cotten noted that the City currently owned more property than needed for the construction of the joint use facility. He was concerned that if the City sold portions of the parcel it could eventually need more land for future expansion.

Alderman Biehl suggested waiting a few years to accommodate the District because all of the entities interested in the joint use facility were separate taxing bodies, which would make consideration easier on the taxpayers.

Commissioner Kampwirth stated that the item would be placed on the August 20, 2002 Darien Park District Board Agenda for consideration.

Alderman Durkin stated that the City and District should enter into an Intergovernmental Agreement with a timetable. He suggested something be done prior to the end of the current year.

Clerk Coleman asked what the term of the lease was for the property at 7201 Cass Avenue; Administrator Nerger responded that it was on a year to year basis with a kick-out clause. Clerk Coleman also asked if the District would be willing to Quit Claim Deed the property to the City; Administrator Nerger said that mechanism had not been considered.

Alderman Cotten wanted assurance that the District was committed and willing to continue with the development process in order to make effective decisions.

Administrator Nerger asked if Council had reviewed the three studies that were submitted; they included separate buildings, similar to a condominium association, partial consolidation and full consolidation. He said that previously all staffs struggled with the cost and what would work due to the volume of vehicles and needed space.

Mayor Soldato noted that Council at the recent Goal Setting Session informally agreed that housing buses inside did not make sense. He said that Council had been informed that the District was no longer interested in the joint use facility and that was the purpose of the meeting. He commented that the City would like to continue working with the District; Administrator Nerger said that he had not heard of any proposed changes, i.e., bus storage and reiterated that the issue would be proposed to the District at its meeting on August 20th.

A formal response was requested from the Darien Park District Board in regard to the joint use facility. There was discussion about the importance of the facility in regard to size, function, cost, timeframe and consultant.

Administrator Vana stated that two consultants were utilized; one provided a space needs assessment and the other provided the conceptual design.

There was discussion about National Semi-Trailer Corp. and their leasing agreement with the City. The Mayor noted that National indicated that they would like to continue leasing the South Frontage Road property from the City.

Commissioner McGreal thanked Council for the invitation to discuss the issue.

Mayor Soldato asked if the public had questions. A resident inquired as to the value of the properties located at 7201 Cass Avenue and 802 Plainfield Road. Administrator Nerger responded that the parcels had an approximate value of \$500,000 and both were currently zoned R-2. He stated that 7201 Cass Avenue contained 2.1 acres and was recently appraised for approximately \$310,000, and that 802 Plainfield Road contained 1.4 acres, was on well and had previously been appraised in the low \$200,000 range.

Mayor Soldato said that the City was approached by a developer in regard to the 10-acre parcel on South Frontage Road who was interested in purchasing eight of the acres.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council adjourned at 8:00 P.M.

Mayor

City ClerkJFC/jr

All supporting documentation and report originals of these minutes are on file in the Office of the City Clerk under File Number 08-12-02.
Special Minutes of 08-12-02 CCM
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